2/4/67

Dear Bill,

Especially after a phone call from Sylvia night before last I do not know what to say about Dean. As Sylvia phoned Maggie, there appears to have been an effort to "plant" someone or some bad material. After her call I got one that may be exactly what she is warning against. I suppose there is always the chance Dean is one such thing. I have no way of knowing. If he has really worthwhile information I see no reason why he cannot write it. I've heard nothing from the last two, one who said he was a Marine Corps buddy of Oswald's (and all of whose information I could check stands up) and another who said he took pictures of the assassination scene right before the motorcade passed. He promised to make copies of these pictures but hasn't.

Liebeler has all the devotion to principle of a wolf with sheep. Before I got tossed off the WNEW Special he declined to appear after finding out I'd be on it on the ground he could not appear with Lane, then has a debate with Lane in Calif. Arlen Specter has declined the same thing seven times that I know of and more recently with WNEW, then flew to England to debate Lane. I wouldn't trust Liebeler with yesterday's sweat. One of the most dishonorable things in my experience is what he did with Epstein and Specter. I think Ray did well to note debate him, because the odds would have been too much Liebeler's way. Liebeler will not debate anyone who really knows the material in a broad sense, and he certainly will not debate anyone who knows anything at all about the part he played. One thing that fascinated me in the working papers I was in is the total lack of any mention of his name. Yet he was at least as active as Specter. These two were the most active. Not a single memo from Liebeler, not a single reference to him! He may have purged the files before he left. Or, I may just not have been in the right files.

The slides are an experience, are they not? In the archive set, unless they've changed it since last I studied them, after all the people including me who had seen them one was still misnumbered, 317. My opinion on what the missing frames show is not changed a bit, and what you report confirms it. The point is what they do not show. Willis is not in them, in the space between the sprocket holes. There was no need to cut off this space in the remote-generation copy the Commission used, but it was done. I've never bought the stress-marks theory, but I know so little of these scientific matters I consider I have no basis for a valid opinion. Eventually we will know, and I'm content to wait until then, for more than when I was out there I'm convinced we are in a new era on this whole matter.

The conflicts between us are unavoidable but we will, for most of us at least, be able to overcome them. I shudder when I hear of such things as the sexual speculations you report were engaged in. In a way Penn has it rougher than any of us, perhaps explaining his tendency to go into such things that I believe would be irrelevant even if true. He will be up this way in two weeks. Had I know his schedule better I could have lined him up with a very good Washington radio appearance yesterday when I was on the biggest station. I'm writing him to let me know what it is in case something can work out on his way back, if it interests him.

Ray told me the same thing about the Capitol record and the horn and I told him he is insane. In my case, although it is impossible not to argue with Ray unless you are willing to sit mute or agree blindly, I think too much of the fault is mine, for I'm older, have the same intensity, and have learned, as he has not yet, to curb some of it. But there is no doubt, swell guy that he is, that he can become

close to intolerable. His intention is exactly the opposite. He is fine, sincere, willing, decent and helpful and devoutly persuaded he knows all the political answers. There were many such people in Germany in the early 1930s, a period of which I often think with great misgivings.

The few times I think of him I wonder about Dave Lifton. Whatever he is working on, if my opinion is worth anything, you are right to preserve his confidence. Either you do not accept it or you live with it. Had mine not been so badly abused in the past year I'd perhaps feel less strongly about this. But especially with something that is either scholarly or commercial, a man is entitled to what is his. In his case, I hope Liebeler uses him less than I think he will.

Going back to the slides, I wish you all, especially Lillian, could now see the movie. Each helps understand the other. The backward motion of the President's head at 313 is so pronounced, as perhaps you may recall, I went over that part if the ms of II and weakened it, fearing people just would not believe it. What no one else seems to have noticed is the abrupt forward motion of the head right before that. I'd like to see the original or a first copy, for the color would be much better. There is another copy I'd like to see, becuse I think the contrast might be better. A black and white print was made from the original in Chicago the night of 11/22/67. I have examined the latter fromes in an editor and under these very adverse conditions could see nothing of significance on the grassy knoll. The shadows are too numerous and too pronounced. Nothing that Manchester says can be credited. I do not believe LIFE doctored the original film. Incidently, they have most of this footage. I keep finding other films no one knows about and that they own.

Schiller is a photographer, not a "journalist", hence Lewis. Schiller used to work for the SatEvePost. I'd never trust any photographic work he did. I don't think Liebeler will ever use any of it where others could make a copy.

I certainly would appreciate a tape of the affair. What I did, until late at night when I got the earlier Liebeler tape you sent me was to sit by the tape machine and record his lies and evasions as the tape ran, stopping it at each lie, digression, evasion, etc. My notes follow his tape. I'd do the same with this as soon as I get it, even if I never use it. I have from the beginning felt that Liebeler is the key man in this, still believe he may yet decide he is really Jekyl, but know there is the Hyde in his character. He is more worried, I'm convinced, than most realize. He demeans himself so in running away from me. I do not chase him, but I'm going to keep ready to. He is more than capable of pulling another stunt like what he did to Specter with Epstein.

If Oswald's pubic hairs had been "shaved", as you quote Penn as saying, then the more important question is a constitutional issue, he was and his pubic hairs parted company in the police station.

I also have an acemedic interest in the Lane part of the tape. I find he is increasingly using my material as his. I shall do nothing about it. I made this decision when I did nothing about the plagiarism almost confirmed by his publisher, when I did nothing about their effort to ruin me early, on the Alan Burke show when Holt's attorney led a passel of four who tried to ruin me in public. When I was in New York to debate Nizer I was also on a dull show against the former head of the Trial Lawyers's Association, who confirmed to me that despite their pretense, these lawyers on the Burke show did not represent the association. He as the then head declined to have the assn. participate. Playboy asked me for a letter on the Lane interview. I sent what I consider a subdued one. They phoned me in advance of the interview and I declined to do anything on the record against him.

The Yale Law Review has decided too late that their format on their piece was wrong. Last summer the author told me what his commission was: a piece on Lane. Now, after he has written it and with a deadline at hand, they have asked him to tone this down. I met with him yesterday at his request and found som errors in the several pages of it he asked me to examine. The net result again is that I'll get very little, despite the author's contrary desire. These advance editorial determinations by people who know nothing may be unavoidable but they are less than honest. Why the YLR should decide in advance what the field is and what the author should do I just cannot begin to understand in any rational terms.

I hope Penn was pseaking figuratively about wall-to-wall carpeting. Elmer Gertz was very bitter about this when I met him in Chicago a month ago.

Aside from the invalidity of this type of approach, there is a futility and from my way of lokking at it, a lack of integrity in deciding on the basis of theory and political prejudice that the members of the Commission were conscious members of a conscious conspiracy. I find no evidence to support this. These men are politicians and live politicial lives. Those who hold these views do not know how such bodies function. Their unhappiness at Earl Warren's California career I understand. What they seek to now do to him, which is unrelated to his past but not his present, I cannot understand. I think they are wrong and if they succeed will not be long in deeply regreting it. This is one of their bonds with Lane, whose polemics in this direction are legally wrong but very effective. Lane's handling of this and the lawyers is perhaps his greatest of many dishonesties.

Save for Lane, none of this diminsihes my personal liking for the people who hold these views I think are wrong and on political rather than factual basis. I have discussed this with Ray alone, without achieving anything, and I shall not mention it or your views again. Ray and I had what would have been a terrible fight on the way to the airport. It wasn't because I remembered myself 20 years ago and could restrain myself. Without realizing he was but knowing that a row could ensued he said some very nasty things, saying he had to to be honest. We didn't fight and I think I understand him better for it. One of his complaints was that I hadn't plugged his monograph. As I told him, it hadn't occurred to me. As I asked him, why did he not suggest it? He then recalled the basis I had laid for it on Sahl. My own experience is that unless the work is accessible at the time, this does little good compared to exposure when it is available, and there is a limit to how much exposure one can get. He has been very helpful, as you know. I've been able to place his monograph only one place becuase I've not had time to go elsewhere, even for myself. But it is very hard to do business with Ray. He will not sell books the way they are sold. I could have placed a number by phone if he'd have sent them out on consignment. If you ever hear of him deciding to do what he should have done in the first place, do that over, make it more popular and more complete, please let me know and I'll send him a little more material that I have for III that no one else has seen.

I'm glad you told me some of the things you did, for I thought I was alone in this semi-isolation. You'd be really shocked if I showed you some of the letters I have, one from Arnoni, who I've never met, and the first from him, that is so slanderous, so unrestrained and irrational you'd never be able to believe it. I sent him an early copy of the book. He accused me of stealing the whole thing. Vince prevented a review in Liberation, agains slandering me and going farthur, trying to blackmail me. Can you imagine how I felt when these were first letters, from pepple with whom I'd had no relationship of even an indirect nature. I do not have to tell you how hurtful they were, and not alone to me. I am satisfied that there is no one more Catholic than the Pope, but I've learned that others feels otherwise. I think that to the degree we can we should concentrate on what we are in accord on.

The BBC thing was grossly unfair to Lane. But there is another thing on which I am in a minority (of one, apparently, too). There was nothing BBC could have done

to help Lane more, and it will sell books like mad. His book was not doing very well in England, where the subject is not doing well at all. Neither is Epsetin's. I wish it were possible for me to get there. WHITEWASH is coming out in paper there this month.

Very few people are interested in or impressed by a quiet, seemingly reasoned approach on TV or radio. The intellectuals are. The masses are not, More than any one thing, what helped me most and what really opened this subject up for the remarkable effective exploitation of Hat, Rinehart, is that fight I had on the Burke show with those who really represented Lane. My phone was a nightmare from the time the show went off about 2 a.m. on a Sunday, and I got hundreds of letters. I sold several thousand books in a week, and could have sold more if all the wholesalers had it in stock. To me it is a measure of the ineffectiveness of Lane's approach and of their fear of him and his knowledge that Arlen Specter has declined three radio and two TV confrontations with me in Philadelphia alone yet flies to England to meet Lane. Now for the first time in England Lane will appear like a human being, a man with deep feelings fighting a cause of principle, and most helpful of all, abused and the underdog. Sylvia and a very few othershave indicated their unhappiness over my appearance against Louis Nizer. For all his consummate skills and great reputation, I made that show dramatic (and Lane had to dom on BBC what I did in New York) and I hurt me Nizer's reputation as it has never been done. To the average person, the people who have to reach, I am satisfied as I can be without having heard the show that I got through.

Nizer has had no end of NY appearances and on top shows. There never has been a reaction to any of #his" shows as there was to this one- 7,000 phone calls the first hour and 2,700 letters the first day. Do you think it was Nizer, who they knew and had had the week before, who got them to run two hours extra when they planned two hour only and considered the possibility of running to a maximum of 2½? So, there was a total exposure of 8 hours, all without commercials or even newscasts. Nizer's partisans were hurt and may have been antagonized. They cost us nothing, for they are and would be against us. I really have no measure of the specific effects of this overly-dramatic thing except that I know of one man who has a radio show who wrote me with nothing but condemnations for WOR and another who on the air said he had been with me in the studio for hours without having heard me raise my voice even under provocation (curtis Crawford), but what choice had I? Indeed, that is the question Sylvia begs. With a nonstop Nizer who has already corrupted the program and the format, it was silence or fight. Perhaps I didn't make maximum use of what time I wrested from him, but I am satisfied that it is he who had me thrown off the TV show. I've asked an honest man with a good and effective program to invite Nizer to debate me on his show. I think he will not. Sylvia tells me the TV thing is but fair. And I tell you that what I wrote that station and the messages I sent the koderator were tremenduous help to Lane on camera, for they were warned.

I'm thankful for what BBC did to Lane, even if it costs me money in England, as it well can. Is there not something in your own prkfession and its concepts that tells youthat in terms of popular appeal I am right? There comes a time when men expect other men to be arroused and suspect them if not. One way I can measure it is this: The next week Dell promised a check. It is to have been delivered yesterday. When I get my 90% of it we'll be a little more than half-way out of debt. Dell immediately offered a deal on WHITEWASH II, which they'd declined in September, with a better royalty and a $10,000 advance. It was hard for me to demur, but I did unless the deal included immediate hardback (here is where we get our exposure, out critical attention, and that is the basis for my decision). I'm waiting for an answer from them. But there is another hardback interest from a publisher who would not even talk to me before and who on four or five different approaches I made would not even read WHITEWASH. This followed my clash with Nizer, in both cases. Maybe it is coincidence. I think not.

When you can, please give me your opinion of an (anti)Manchester book. I'm thinking seriously of doing one, tentatively entitled Manchester Machiavelli: The

Unintended Unofficial Whitewash. I've done 10,000 words already on just his second serialization. I plan a short book, and I do believe that if it can come out at all close to his (it can beat it if a publisher really wants to) has the possibility of attracting some attention and doing some good if, as I intend, it is all fact and shows Manchester is all fiction. I know there will be an uncritical, critical burst that this is an effort to capitalize, etc., but I've learned that means little today. Except for the minuscule Eastern intellectual community, nobody pays serious attention tp reviewers on controversial books. I'll bet right now I've sold more books on this subject than anyone, without a single major review, without a single review of my own, and without a single favorable mention in the major press, most of which has boycotted WHITEWASH entirely.

My real concern is not how long I can continue this pace, for I began at 2:15 a.m. yesterday and could have kept going longer when I retired at 11 last night. I hate every minute I am not in the archive or on III. My recent finds have been, I think, quite important. I worked on them yesterday until 9 a.m. when I had to leave for Washington, to take Lil to the doctor and be on a radio show. Liebeler will be anything but happy at the dredging of the staff papers. I will not be able to spend as much time in them as I'd like to, but my first couple of days were very good, on the subject, on Specter, on the autopsy, the pictures, the doctors, the FBI, the photographers and even the bar association and Craig! In any other context, on any other subject, my last hundred sheets of papers would in themselves be a major scandal. For example, I have Specter, after he read the autopsy report, after he interviewed the doctors, reporting their report of not a neck but a back wound with the correction of but a single word - back - clearly visible. Regardless of what was there to begin with, it ends up "back". I have the experts saying Kennedy could have been shot by Frame 163, Connally saying it was 190, the doctors saying Connally was hit by two bullets (and I think here is the origin of the single-bullet theory) and that 399 could not have caused his wrist wound (including Light and Dolce, who was never called as a witness), and much more. I wish I did not still have financial problems, for there are more papers I'd have copied on hunch. I think it is possible they took depositions never printed. I may be wrong, but I saw names I do not recall in the hearings.

Aside from not getting it out when I'd planned, money is my great fear about III. I do not think I can charge more than $4.95 (which gives me but $2.50 on most copies) and have the book pay for itself even if it sells well.

Now I've got to get back to work. Thanks for your long, chatty letter. If you can, drop us a note when you expect the Lucy show to be aired. Lil wants very much to see what you look like. Our best to all (and I'm very happy Lillian is coming out of it. I wish she could see the original film of the Wolper film. I've not got all the names and addresses of those who contributed to it). One other thing, I've got more and interesting stuff on the False Oswald story.

Sincerely,